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a family of LGBTQ prisoners and "free world" LGBTQIA allies who support each other

August 2012 Newsletter

Dear friends,

In the heat of summer I know the world behind prison walls can be unbearable. There have been reports of prisoners without fans or air conditioners. There are stories of prisoners losing access to water on the hottest days. I pray that you are all taking care of your bodies as best as you possibly can and that you find moments to cool yourselves and find strength.

This is Black August, a celebration of Black survival and a time to tell the stories of violence against Black people. Mumia Abu Jamal, a political prisoner in Pennsylvania, wrote the following of Black August, "August – a month of injustice and divine justice, of repression and righteous rebellion, of individual and collective efforts to free the slaves and break the chains that bind us. August saw slaves and the grandsons of slaves strike out for their God-given right to freedom, as well as the awesome price, the ultimate price always paid by those who would dare oppose the slave master's will." He listed some of the key moments that August holds of history, many of them include the stories of prisoners and the stories of slaves, two constants in the reality of Black lives.

- ◆ August 1619 – The first group of Black laborers, called indentured servants, landed at Jamestown, Virginia.
- ◆ Aug. 25, 1967 – Classified FBI memos went out to all bureaus nationwide with plans to "disrupt, misdirect, discredit or otherwise neutralize" Black Liberation Movement groups.
- ◆ Aug. 21, 1971 – Black Panther Party Field Marshall George L. Jackson was assassinated at San Quentin Prison, California. Three guards and two inmate turncoats were killed, three wounded.
- ◆ Aug. 22, 1831 – Nat Turner's rebellion rocked Southampton County, Virginia, and the entire South when slaves rose up and slew their white masters.
- ◆ Aug. 30, 1856 – John Brown led an anti-slavery raid on a group of Missourians at Osawatomie, Kansas.
- ◆ Aug. 7, 1970 – Jonathan Jackson, younger brother of Field Marshal George, raided the Marin County Courthouse in California, arming and freeing three Black prisoners, taking the judge, prosecutor and several jurors hostage. All, except one prisoner, were killed by police fire that perforated the escape vehicle. Jon was 17.

There are many stories in August that need to be told about oppression and resistance. For many of you August may be the start of your sentence, the beginning of your court hearings, the day you were assaulted by the prison guards. It may also be the anniversary of your surviving moment, the day you had the strength to keep fighting for your freedom, the moment when you found the hope needed to resist. This is a month to recognize legacy and to feel the wisdom of elders. I hope that you are able to use this month, Black August, to learn, listen, tell stories, and feel energized in the fight for freedom!

I also want to let you know some little things about our family and the work on the outside. I joined another member of our leadership circle, Johannes, at the Allied Media Conference in Detroit, Michigan. We were able to meet with organizations from across the country who are doing similar and different work. We talked about different ways to use multiple media forms to tell our stories and to build the movement to stop the violence of the prison industrial complex. Our reputation precedes us, and there is much respect for the newsletter we distribute and the efforts of Black and Pink, I thank all of you for your incredible writing and the power you give our organizing efforts. There is much for us on the outside still to learn and ways we need to increase our accountability to you, and I appreciate your willingness to guide us as we continue struggling knowing that once there were no prisons, that day will come again.

With love and solidarity!

Jason

Struggling in New York

My name is Jermaine, I'm a gay Afro American male who was falsely set up with a homemade weapon in a New York prison for being gay. My question is why do people hate gays so much that they would go out their way to see people go through hell. It's like we have no rights in here. Every day it's the same routine with me being bullied, ridiculed, assaulted, harassed, and humiliated by those people who do not understand or affiliate themselves with our lifestyle. Our gay brothers got to sit on the ground while everybody else sits at cement picnic tables. My family even disown me for being gay. I don't get letters from no one in the outside society. It's like no one knows I'm alive. Not to mention that people of our lifestyle in New York State Prisons do not have good programs where we can go and learn about how to prevent the spread of STI's, HIV/AIDS, or learn about staying health period. I am HIV negative, thankfully. Please tell me what I have to do to make our gay brothers life in here better than it is, I will do anything. God bless you all and the people of the Newsletter.

-Jermaine, New York



Dear B&P Tribe,

Peace and Blessings to you all. It is my sincere hope and prayer that this missive finds you all in good health and high spirits. I am an Afr/Am male, 36, serving a slow death sentence (LWOP) in the state of Illinois. I have been encouraged, inspired, challenged, and emboldened by the B&P Newsletter's content. It's arguable the most unique & thought provoking periodical of it's kind. As a student of mapinduzi (Revolution) in all its forms, I must say, your application of it is always "on point."

In fact, I was named after a Revolutionary, Congolese Nationalist Patrice Emery Lumumba who was killed/assassinated in 1961 by Belgian, American, and African co-conspirators. I am a Black gay Revolutionary wholly committed to "raging against the machine" and putting an end to the oppressor! As a born and bred member of the lumpenproletariat I empathize with all oppressed people's globally.

A minor victory was won with Obama being forced to "come clean" about his support for marriage equality, but there's still much more work to be done. With that said, the president's protestation had to have been music to the ears of our comrades who fought at Stonewall in 1969. Freedom, Equality, and Justice is on the march!! Keep the faith, continue to resist, and remember- Revolution is the only solution!! Fight the Power!!!

In Solidarity,
Mr. Patrice D., Illinois



Try and Understand

If tomorrow never came, would I regret today?
If yesterday never was, would I remember it anyway?
If I left you at the crossroads to take the beaten path,
Would the sun rise again if nothing else was left?
When I look up to the sky, are you looking at it too?
Can you make the old, seem as something new?
Every new beginning comes from another's end,
Can you be there by my side when all I need is a friend?
When nothing is going right, the world tearing as the seams,
Can you mend my broken heart and then fulfill my dreams?
And as I share my faults will you understand,
No matter how I try, I'll always be just a man?



Tim H., Ohio

Hello Family of Black & Pink,

My name is Charles, known by people as Amber Maree Cooper. I am a 24 year old transexual. I have not had the surgery yet. I'm from Maryland, and I am a recovering drug addict. I was addicted to "E" pills, in the medical world known as "MDMA". I have 5 years clean today. I am in prison in a Maximum Security Slave Plantation/Modern Day Warehouse in Maryland.

I am due to be released later this year, I am so excited since I've been down on this 5 year bit, it's been a ride. Family, let me tell you I came in the door as a white anti-racist, I look up to Mutulu Shakur, George Jackson, Abu-Jamal, and Malcolm X. I hate oppression, I hate racist people, most of all I hate the prison-industrial complex. Mrs. Neely is 100% right- for everyone in the family who has never been behind the walls, this is a major tentacle of the slaveocracy which exists in the United States and beyond. I get paid 62 cents a day to clean a building of 300+ inmates. That's nothing compared to others' job descriptions: Cut grass on 80+ acres with a push mower for 70 cents a day- straight crazy! I quit, I'm no slave, and I got a ticket and went on lock up.

Family, I am young but I am motivated for change, I just need the support of my fellow Brothers and Sisters, and I've found in in the Black & Pink Family. I give big thanks to Occupy 4 Prisoners movement, and all the others who are trying to help us LGBTQ Sisters and Brothers in this Hell hole of a Jim Crow place. I am in one of the most racist prisons in the state of Maryland. I've done been beat, had my jaw broke, urinated on, starved to the point of needing medical attention, sprayed with mace, all by these Correctional Slavemasters who call themselves CO's. All because I'm trying to change their system and I expose their dirty laundry when a lot of others are too weak to do so.

Just to give you guys a little input on what my goals are for when released. If I can get some help once people see that I am for real and not just talking, I want to start a Prisoner's Movement and I would love for the help from the Black & Pink family. I think it would be a great accomplishment for this newly founded family to really change this corrupt enterprise. And let those Wall Street fools know that LGBTQ is nothing to play with, because we get crap done with the support and guidance from our Higher Power. I've had 4 Federal Civil cases but lost because I am in their house, I have to play by their rules. But I think I'll have better chances at getting laws passed once I am on the street, what do you guys think?? :)

My Coming Out Story

It was the winter of 2000. I was 14 years old and I was sitting on my front porch with my sister, the dude I was messing with at the time, and a friend of mine, and out of the blue I jumped up out of my lawn chair and I said, "I'm tired of living this way. I'm tired of living in denial of who I am and what makes me happy, the way that God made me."

So I stormed in the house. Crying, I went upstairs to my Mom's room and I woke her up. It was 12:00 am. I said 'Mom, I have something I want to tell you', and she said 'Chuck, tell me.' I said 'Mom, please don't be mad at me and please don't stop loving me,' she said 'I won't'. I was crying like I'd been shot. I said 'Mom I am gay, I am in love with boys.' My Mom looks at me and dries my tears and says 'Chuckie, I've known ever since you were 8 years old that you were gay. You are my son and I'll love you no matter what.' I looked at her and said 'Mom, thanks, I love you too' then I left.

Once I got down stairs I said to myself Man Oh Man, that was easy, and I felt so much better. Now I had to tell my Dad, but that was going to be very very hard, because I used to hear my Dad talk about gays, lesbos, and black people like they were the worst in the world. But I said 'he's going to be just like Mom, he will love me for who I am.' So I called him, I said 'Hello Dad, how are you, I do not mean to wake you but I want to tell you something that's been bothering me and on my mind that I've been hiding from you.' He said 'What son?'. I said 'Dad, I'm gay. I like men'. I heard him suck his teeth like he was taking his last breath, then he hung up on me. 15 minutes later, he called me back and these were his words: "You f***ing n****r-loving faggot, if you ever come to my house or around me I'll hang you over an apple tree and watch your ass die." I broke down in tears and it shot me down. At that young age I could not deal with it. I went upstairs and cried and cried. I felt so disgusted with myself and God for making me like this, that I tried to kill myself and was admitted to an Adolescent Psych Hospital.

Family, that's the short version of my coming out story. It's different now, I'm out like the sun, and I advocate and try to help the ones who are too scared to exit the closet and be free. I want us to talk more in this Newsletter about starting a movement to end oppression against our community and everyone, and end the prison system.

Till next time, keep it cute or put it on mute. Much love to the B&P Family and all the LGBTQ out there.

Love Eternally,

Charles / Amber Maree Cooper, Maryland

Dearest Sisters & Brothers,

Hey, It's Deirdre out in dusty old Nevada, and I'm sorry I haven't written for so long. Forgive me? First I want to thank you all for your support in last year's election. It hasn't been misplaced either, as I have some great news to share with all of you.

Count Nevada as another of the states to be challenged in it's transphobic laws, and beaten! I've been fighting the State and N.D.O.C. [Nevada Dept of Corrections] for transgender rights and for my hormones and care in a § 1983 action for the last four or so years. After a very long and very hard fight, I was called and offered settlement by the A.G.'s office. Punch for punch, kick for kick I've traded with these people for so long, and now I'm getting everything I've asked for in my complaint, minus money (which I didn't expect anyway). I told them that I would accept no less than being seen be a real doctor and to be prescribed my E.H.T.'s; after some back and forth, I was offered precisely that!

My advice is this: if you have a need and desire, fight for it!



Find someone to help you if you can. Get your prison system's rules for medical care and Transgender care (if they have any). Get everything! Start out by asking for help and be sincere and persistent. If that doesn't work, start your grievance process. Be prepared for retaliation, and keep going. Keep your cool and don't fall into them trying to ~~you~~ trip you up. Don't act stupid, and keep track of every comment and action by keeping a journal. After taking your grievances as far as they can go, file in your local courts. Make the State remove it to the Federal level and pay for it. Ask your law library for copies of the court's rules, at each level: county/state, Federal district, and then the Appellate level (if necessary). At this point make sure you keep all your deadlines up and don't be late on filings. Don't let the opposition or your prison or even the courts intimidate you. Keep swinging.

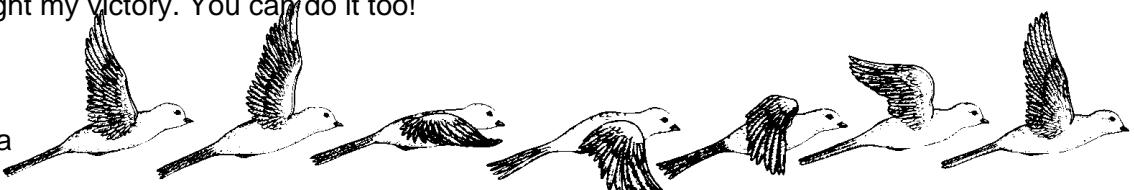
For example: I had my complaint dismissed at the "Screening Phase" in the Federal District courts (see HUNDLEY v. POAG, 3:10-CV-00406-RCJ-VPC) due to: not exhausting my Grievance process, not stating a claim, and for including N.D.O.C. and the State of Nevada as defendants. This dismissal was "with prejudice." All of that was wrong, as I did exhaust all grievances, I did state a claim (six times), and naming the State & N.D.O.C. at the state level is required. By the way, kids, the courts cannot "dismiss with prejudice" a complaint by a Pro Se (that's you- without a lawyer) litigant. You are entitled to amend your complaint. By now you are going to file an appeal in your Fed. Appellate Court (for me it was the 9th Circuit). Follow all the rules and timelines accurately and promptly. You will have to pay the docketing fee (about \$450), but if you're 'In Forma Pauperis' [don't have the money] it can be made in increments of 20% of whenever you get money on your books. This is where you get them, because they don't expect you to do it! How much is your health & happiness worth to you?

Bottom line? Keep fighting no matter what! They will try everything to make you quit (and they did with me). Don't ever quit! Every single victory we make adds up. We must keep fighting. Women, Blacks, Latinos, gays and lesbians- we all go through it. The Transgender community needs to put our work in and step up to

be recognized and understood, boys and girls. **It's our turn to be able to give to those youngsters who will follow us the ability to exist with pride and happiness. Keep fighting! Just because we are prisoners, on top of being transgender, doesn't mean we must suffer in two prisons. Fight. Spread your wings and take flight and let no one keep you down!** I had no help, no attorney, no advocacy group (though I asked all of them for help), no family. Just me and a sincere and strong desire to be whole. That what brought my victory. You can do it too!

In Love & Strength,

Jamee Deirdre, Nevada



Slave Country

I was born from a womb
 Of a mother who smokes
 Grew of age in a Concrete Tomb
 Choking on Interstate 15's exhaust smoke
 My veins, I must stretch to feel at ease
 This is what my life is like
 From conception to the grave
 Unable to Breath
 Quit what it is you hate
 While you still hate it
 Three quarters done with my sentence
 Hoping someone is still there to say
 "You've made it"
 Considered depressed and despondent
 Since the age of five
 What's when I learned to Pledge Allegiance
 Age Five
 They taught us loyalty to one's country
 As I smuggled cans of copenhagen and snickers
 To my Daddy
 In prison
 Age Five
 I was born of a country
 Built on and maintaining D.O.C. Slavery
 Pledged Allegiance to a flag
 That destroyed my family
 So, you see
 This is what my life is like
 From conception to the grave
 Unable to Breath

-Brandon, Utah



The Gift of Love

We each have a gift we can give
 Each day, each night that we live
 In giving we also receive
 Gifts in return, if we no not deceive
 Greater treasures than silver or gold
 When we open our arms, another to hold
 When we open out hearts, another to uplift
 With the gift of love, this wondrous gift

Neither black nor white- color blind we be
 Lesbians, Gays, Bi's, all are we
 Trans, Queers, though near or far
 We all can shine, like a shining star
 Fill each others hearts with love and joy
 Regardless if we're labeled girl or boy
 Though storms may gather, and fears increase
 The gift of love brings us perfect peace

Dedicated to all GLBTQ- everywhere!

*Two people looked out from prison bars-
 one saw only mud, one saw only stars.*

-Mavourneen, Georgia



To B&P Family,

Hi! I'm Kyle, and I would like to address the topic of Jason's cover letter on the May 2012 Newsletter, regarding the theme "organizational struggles," which revolve around the book mentioned, *Love and Struggle, by David Gilbert*. *I wish to discuss the theme rather than the book, as I have not yet had the chance to read it.* I was on the opposite spectrum as David Gilbert- I used to be a skinhead. But now I am aware of who I am and openly embrace it. I trained and recruited many, young and old, for that movement. I started young and was raised within the organization, was recognized as a leader and trained to do just that. They taught me a lot, especially how to "organize," and how to accumulate and direct its potential towards the bonds of opposition.

At this moment, prisoners such as myself, are not the only people who share the fate locked down as "political prisoners." Free people share this as well. All people are prisoners to whatever political power subjugates them. The term "free" is strained and politically incorrect in this country. America has redefined Freedom, stripping its very definition, endangering its principle.

There are those who share this common ground, and wish to take action against our common opposition. Only we are side tracked repetitively by unnecessary setbacks, harboring ourselves, losing sight of our common interest. This leaves us weakened and exposed to confinement while giving those who oppose us the chance to dismantle us from within, leaving us to deteriorate as an organization. The point is all oppositions do need to evaluate their cause to find a common ground. Most will ask "How do I benefit from this?" It is sad but unavoidable in uniting, in "organizing." Prisoners benefit from whatever they need, more food, visits, phones, etc, as long as they "organize." Our benefit is "freedom," the principle, untainted by politically incorrect modernists. This needs to be made clear if we seek forward progress. We drive to replace the current definition of "freedom" with the true one. We wish to cleanse the disease that plagues our opposition. We believe in redefining law separating it from capitalism, then utilize it through a clanocentric agreement equalizing all voices. Stay strong and know that everyone has a strength necessary in this struggle, so let your voice be heard!

In Abolition,
Kyle, Arizona

Editor's Note: To add to Kyle's statements about "freedom" and "free people," we share this, which was written by the "Free World" Leadership Circle and is in the "Terminology" section of the Black & Pink website: *"Free World" – We understand "free world" people to be those who are not currently in prison/jail/detention/etc. We use quotation marks because we understand the terminology of freedom to be deeply complex. There are those who would suggest that none of us are free as there is such heavy surveillance in our communities—the tentacles of the prison industrial complex are expansive. Others would suggest that freedom exists within ourselves and that it can never be taken from us. Regardless of how one understands freedom, in our terminology "free world" refers to those not currently confined in prison/jail/detention/etc.*



Photo: <http://tribune.com.pk>

Pakistan trans activists protest against US drone strikes

8/2/12, Gay Star News

Recent USA drone strikes in Pakistan galvanised the transgender community to join political and faith groups protesting against such actions.

The Express Tribune reported that dozens of transgender women held a rally and demonstrated against the drone strikes in city of Sukkur, central Pakistan. There have been several protests by political and faith groups, and on Monday (30 July) the transgender community in Sukkur joined the anti-drone protests. *Continued on Page 7...*

SUPPORT CECE McDONALD!

SOLIDARITY WITH TRANS PEOPLE TARGETTED BY THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

Update from CeCe in St. Cloud: July, 2012

The call-in campaign for CeCe to get her correct dosage of hormones was an incredible success! The prison's health administration were so "inconvenienced", they were compelled to clear the issue immediately. CeCe is doing fine and looking fabulous. She is steadily devouring the books that everyone is sending – currently she is reading Angela Davis and is totally inspired.

She spoke a bit about the push from some supporters to launch large-scale campaigns to get Gov. Mark Dayton to pardon her, and/or to have her moved to a women's facility. She talked about how these campaigns would not only not benefit her, but how they exceptionalize her in a way that she doesn't want. The pardoning process would not only be painful for her, but were she even to get considered, it wouldn't be until after she served her sentence. She thinks about people incarcerated for much longer terms than she, and for incredibly minor offenses (mostly drug related). Even if the emotional hardship of the process was something she felt up for, and even if the slim chance of it working actually succeeded, the outcome of her getting a pardon while others sat in prison is antithetical to her values and the whole reason she is struggling against this racist system in the first place.

As for being transferred to a women's facility, her thoughts are: Prison sucks. Period. CeCe is not safe in any prison, women's or men's. Prisons are not safe for anyone. Period. CeCe asserts (as do we) that incarcerated individuals should be able to decide for themselves where they would be safest within the system. For now, CeCe is fine being in a men's facility. For supporters to push for her to be transferred from one hell to another only serves the purpose of misdirecting energy away from the real problems of incarceration in the U.S., and the problem of the Prison Industrial Complex as a whole.

To sum it up: CeCe does not want supporters to launch long-term campaigns on her behalf that exceptionalize her situation.. Also importantly, these specific campaigns: a pardon from Gov. Dayton and getting transferred to a women's facility, wouldn't actually be beneficial to her at all. Short term campaigns such as call-ins to administration, and media blasts, are targeted efforts that let the DOC know that CeCe has widespread support, and it sends a message that we are watching them and will respond to prisoner's needs – CeCe's today, and other incarcerated trans people tomorrow. CeCe sends her love and gratitude to everyone who called-in on her behalf. She wishes that every wrongly incarcerated person had the same incredible support that she has, and prays for a world without bars, a world without cells.

<http://supportcece.wordpress.com>

Continued from Page 6: According to the protestors, the drone strikes escalate the violence are harmful and therefore counterproductive. The transgender community protest was led by Sanam Fakir, who is reported as heading a local welfare trust. Fakir criticized the drone strikes in Pakistan's tribal areas stating that thousands of innocent men, women and children have suffered from the 'merciless' strikes, rather than the USA's alleged terrorists. She said that the drone strikes are responsible for the deaths of innocent people and are therefore greater acts of terrorisms. Fakir rhetorically asked how would the USA target terrorists shielding themselves in a school full of children without endangering everyone.

Hello Family,

I just wanted to write and share an acronym that I call myself here in state prison in California. G.O.A.T., which most people say is Greatest Of All Time. I think of it as Gay, Out, And Thuggish. After all, who do you know that don't like a bad boy with swagger, style, and gay to the core!? Well, that's me and to all my LGBTQ Family with a Little Thug in them- Embrace your GOAT.

Derrick, California

John Mathenge: Where is the change?



[Now More than Ever] sat down and chatted with John at the Sex Workers' Freedom Festival in Kolkata, India. Here's what he had to say...

I was born in a poor poor poor family in the Central Province, a very remote place in Kenya. I am born gay – it is my identity. For 11 years now I have been living positive. I wanted people to know that gay men in Africa can also be positive. I came out openly, so I have three positives: gay man, sex worker, HIV-positive.

I'm the coordinator of the Kenya Sex Workers Alliance, which is a coalition of sex worker-led organizations in Kenya. We recognize diversity – male, female and transgender sex workers. I started activism long before I joined the Alliance in 2010 – I was an activist with the global Network of Sex Work Projects. I used to write articles, go to media, tell people I am a male sex worker. People always think in a country like Kenya there are only female sex workers.

Male sex workers face discrimination from the MSM community. They never realize we are gay people, but we identify as male sex workers. They ask us: "Why do you have to do sex work?" We are excluded from the MSM community. At the same time, we also face violence from clients for being gay – they have sex with you, then start shouting at you. "This man is gay! Beat him up!" Male sex workers have been raped and even had broken bottles shoved up their anus.

We tell people to report cases to our alliance for documentation and for legal support. But same-sex rape is not recognized as rape in Kenya. As a man, I cannot go to the general hospital or clinic and say I was raped. So we can only go to the sex workers clinic. If we go for treatment to the general clinic, doctors ask other health workers to come and see a gay man. This is the stigma that we face as gay male sex workers.

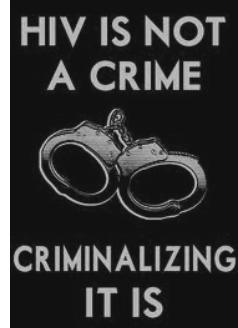
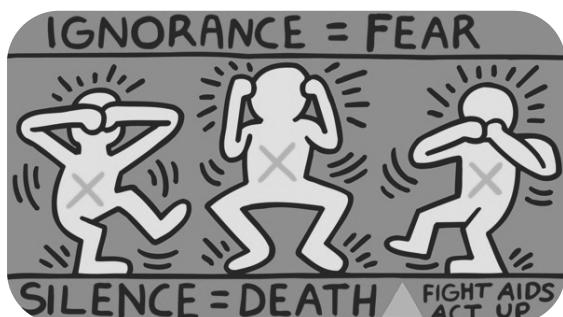
We also face abuse by the community. They always think this is so unAfrican, they think this is immoral. At the same time, they are the ones who want to come and have sex with you and pay you. They are the ones who identify you as a sex worker and call you names. Then when it is dark, they come and have sex with you. The police, they want a bribe, if you don't have a bribe, they can rape you.

So many people here think that if you have anal sex, you cannot contract HIV – so many people want to have anal sex. These days competition between male and female workers is very high but we work so close; females and males get each other clients. The same client may go to a man or a woman.

In Kolkata, we are protesting against the US government and telling them to respect sex workers. Sex workers are mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers and children. HIV does not respect people. If we are fighting HIV, we need to join hands no matter whether we are straight, gay, sex workers, whatever...but with no discrimination. This is high time we tell the US government they should respect all human rights – whether you are a sex worker, straight, gay, disabled. We are all equal.

We are telling the US government to repeal the anti-prostitution pledge which was signed by the former president George Bush. Obama, when he became the president, he said "I am the president of everyone" — that should include gay people and sex workers. He said 'Yes We Can' for change! But there's no change yet, so he has failed the whole world of discriminating against sex workers and not removing that prostitution pledge."

By John Mathenge, 2012-07-27 www.hivhumanrightsnow.org/blog/john-mathenge-where-is-the-change/



"ACT UP's say NO to the criminalization of HIV transmission. More than 30 states have such laws which drive people away from testing and ultimately undermine HIV prevention efforts."
<http://visualaids.blogspot.com/2012/06/act-up-fight-hiv-criminalization.html>



Jonathan Cohen: Why We Marched

Optimism is the order of the day at AIDS 2012, with “treatment as prevention” now a reality, a blueprint for an AIDS-Free Generation just released by the US government, and non-US residents with HIV now allowed to enter the country. But there is another conversation going on — in the Global Village, the blogosphere, and



XIX INTERNATIONAL AIDS
CONFERENCE JULY 22 - 27
WASHINGTON DC USA



the streets of Washington, DC — that is providing more of a reality check. There is no

question we can end AIDS. That is reason for optimism and was the central message of the mobilization that took place on Tuesday afternoon. But ending AIDS won’t be easy, and the challenges lie in political, economic, social, and structural barriers that make it impossible in some places to translate the best science into more treatment and fewer infections.

These barriers are not trivial. They include the “war on drugs,” the prison industrial complex, the war on reproductive rights, the moral crusade against sex work, the negotiation of free trade agreements that place intellectual property above people’s lives, and other massive global phenomena. These phenomena haven’t stopped us from making great progress against AIDS in the last 30 years — but could they stop us from ending it?

We marched on Tuesday to call attention to these barriers. We marched to remind our political leaders that AIDS is a product not just of a virus, but of the kind of world we live in. We marched to unite science with social justice. We marched to show the diversity of voices and communities who need to be part of the solution.

Sadly, we marched without many of our peers. Sex workers and people who use drugs from around the world have been excluded from this conference by discriminatory laws barring them from eligibility for US visas. How can we speak so optimistically of ending AIDS when such a blatant example of social exclusion that drives the epidemic is staring us right in the face?

As the march wound down, I strolled over with two colleagues to the Washington Mall to view the AIDS Memorial Quilt, on display here this week. It had rained so the organizers were packing the quilt up. A solitary voice was reading a seemingly endless trail of names of the deceased into a microphone to an empty mall. Blocks away, activists were getting arrested for tying themselves to the White House fence.

Yes, we marched because we can end AIDS. But we also marched because AIDS is far from over.
By Jonathan Cohen, 2012-07-27, www.hivhumanrightsnow.org/blog/jonathan-cohen-why-we-marched/



Keep in Touch with Black & Pink
Black & Pink—{Insert topic tag here}
c/o Community Church of Boston
565 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116

If you would like to Request:	Use this Topic Tag, please, and we'll do our best:
Newsletter Subscriptions (Start or Stop)	Newsletter Subscriptions
Newsletter Submissions (Poems & Stories)	Newsletter Submissions
“Outside” Free Pen-Pal Ad form request	Pen-Pal
Black & Pink Organization Feedback	Developing Leadership
Request Erotica	Erotica
Religious Support	Religion
Volunteering (Send thank you cards to donors etc.)	Volunteer
Advocacy (Include details about situation and thoughts about how calls or letters might help)	Advocacy

LEGAL: Consider writing to Lambda Legal for support or referrals with legal issues that you are having. “Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work.”

Lambda Legal, National Office 120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005, 212-809-8585

Another resource to turn to, if you can afford the subscription (\$24 yearly, payable with new stamps), is Prison Legal News. This resource was co-started by a former gay prisoner and Men Against Sexism organizer, Ed Mead, though now it is run by Paul Wright. You can reach them by writing to:

Prison Legal News, P.O. Box 2420, West Brattleboro, VT 05303

SURVIVORS: Just Detention International provides support for prisoners who are survivors of sexual abuse. Write them at the legal address below for a packet. Each packet includes an introductory letter, a list of local resources, fact sheets, publications about recovery from sexual abuse, and a letter of hope from another survivor.

Ms. Chris Daley, Esq., 3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010

BLACKANDPINK.ORG

BLACKANDPINKMEMBERS@GMAIL.COM

"I once said I did not understand you pink triangles at all, and I still don't think I ever will. But I have a better understanding of love than I did then. It's not that you love more or better than other people. I think it's that you love when everything in the world is against you."

from "Behold a Pale Horse" by Lannon D. Reed

-Kelly J.